



# *Life's a Hoot!*



*The International Owl Collectors' Club,  
54 Tiverton Road, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 6BE, England.*

Greetings and welcome to issue eleven, the first issue coming to you from my new computer using a new version of my publishing package. I've just spent over an hour getting as far as setting up the structure etc. for Life's a Hoot, because of all the differences in the new system. I hope it will be easier from here. You probably won't notice many differences. The chap on the back cover is a saw-whet owl from my new art package, CorelDRAW! The art comes in colour and I can print it out that way, but I can't afford to have this photocopied in colour so you will have to put up with the monochrome version. It's still rather lovely, and of course, the rubber stamping is still here to brighten things up. If anyone knows of any computer clip-art for sale which includes good images of owls I'd very much like to hear about it, please.

As no-one objected, this issue is timed to be posted at the end of February instead of the end of January so that we don't clash with Owls magazine. This also lets me review Owls if it gets to me early enough. It was also particularly useful this time as I was ill most of January and probably couldn't have managed to do it then anyway!

I understand a few of you never got issue 10 - if this applies to you and you haven't told me yet do please write. The post still seems to be causing problems in stuff sent both to me and by me but there doesn't seem to be anything we can do except mail things to each other and hope for the best.

My owl buying has slowed down recently, as I am committed to buying both the collectors series of owls and the bronze Great Horned owl from Franklin Mint, which between them are using up quite a bit of my 'spare cash' budget. Still I think they're worth it.

Thanks very much to all the contributors to this issue - please please send something for the next one if you can, as it is almost impossible for me to do twelve pages on my own. It would probably be very boring to read, too.

Now read on.

*Elise*



## Charity Corner

First I must tell you that Eileen Watkinson, who runs the Three Owls sanctuary (where our adoptees Barney and Mop Chaser live) is ill and in hospital. We all wish her better. While she is away other volunteers are running the sanctuary, but they can use all the help they can get, both physical and financial. If you can help, do write or call. They are at Wolstenholme Fold, Norden, Rochdale OL11 5UD, England. Telephone 0706 42162. They are open for visitors on Sundays from 2 to 5pm, and at other times by arrangement.



The Raptor Centre, which we have mentioned before, has moved from Chilham Castle and will be re-opening in Groombridge Place, just outside Tunbridge Wells, in the Spring. More news on that when I have it.

The Tomar Owl Sanctuary, who rescue injured owls and breed and release owls to the wild, are looking for Friends (£10) and Adopters (£40) to help them with their work. They are at Cheesmans Green, Mersham,

Ashford, Kent TN25 7HY, telephone 0233 503437. They are open for visitors but telephone first! They can also provide owls for schools, displays, promotions etc.

The East of England Birds of Prey Conservation Centre, St Jacobs Hall, Laxfield, Suffolk, IP13 8HY (0986 798844) is also looking for members and adopters, their prices starting at just £5. When Wendy Carr went in November they had seven breeds of owl on show, including the Milky Eagle Owl (*Bubo Lacteus*) who has particularly lovely markings in the face, a flying display featuring a Turkmenian Eagle Owl and a lovely shop and tea-room. They are open every day and are building a Board Walk so that disabled people can see the birds more easily. The boardwalk project needs 5,000 planks of wood and they are asking for sponsorship of planks at £2 each.

Thanks to Wendy for much of the above information.





# **Why The Great Spirit Made the Crow and the Owl**

**A native American legend, re-told by  
David C Montgomery, ©1994**



**One Day the Great Spirit heard much angry shouting coming from the earth. He went there and saw that men and mice were having a bitter argument. The Great Spirit asked why they were fighting on His earth, which is a place of peace. He was told by the leader of men: "During the day we clear the forest and plant maize so it will grow plentifully and fed us and our families. At night the mice come and steal**

**it. As they eat our maize they increase in numbers and soon will over-run our homes." The leader of the mice replied: "The earth is the mother of men AND mice. It is she who gives the food, not men. Mice and their families must eat, too; and being small, we take very little. And if we grow in numbers, so do men, who take away our forest homes to plant their crops." The men then repeated their arguments more loudly then before and the mice replied more loudly than before.**

**The Great Spirit was angry that men and mice would not live together in the harmony in which he created them. In his anger and in His fairness the Great Spirit then made the Crow and the Owl. By day the crow would eat the maize, so that men would truly have to work for their crops, keeping watch over them. By night the owl would eat the mice, so that they would have to work for their food, hiding from the owl.**

**At first the mice thought the arrangement was not fair because they could loose their lives but the men could loose only their crops. But later the mice understood that if the men lost their crops they would loose their lives, while mice could always eat what the forest offered. The men, however, never accepted what the Great Spirit had done. That is why, to this very day, men set traps for mice but mice set no traps for men.**



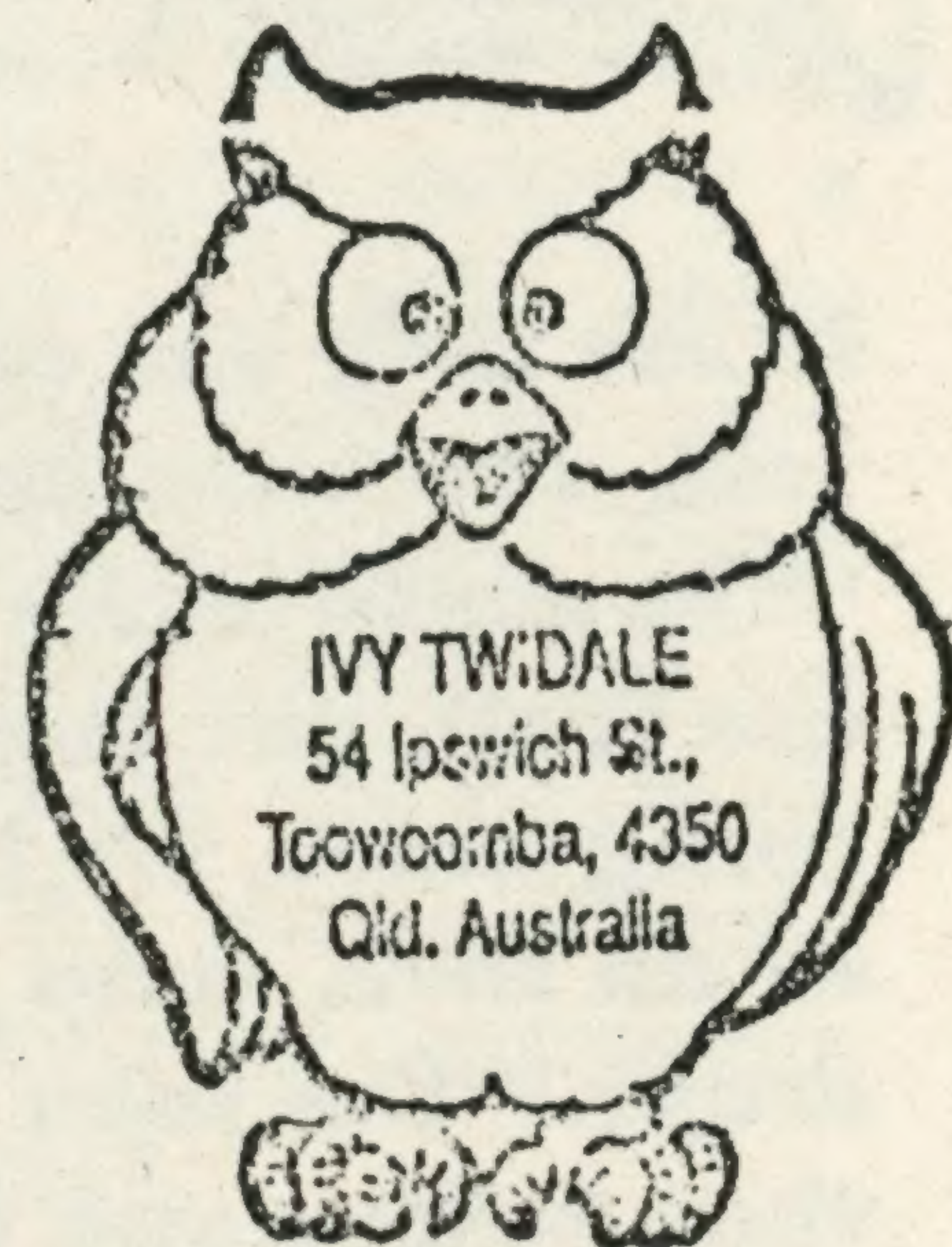


## Letter from Australia

It seems ages since the last Life's a Hoot, and life is really hootless and boring. I was going to write to the place with the owl beads that you mentioned last issue, but when I at last found time I noticed you forgot to put the address! (Sorry, it is Spangles, 1 Casburn Lane, Burwell, Cambs. CB5 0ED, England. - Elise) I hope to be able to get the beads because they sound lovely.

I got some wonderful owly things for Christmas, including a floor mat (I now have two, one cotton and the other seagrass), a shirt, an owl jigsaw puzzle and a beautiful pendant on a chain. It is a hologram and is so lovely that I wear it nearly every time I go out and at least one person (owl lover or not) tells me how beautiful it is! I also got a wooden sign with THE OWL HOUSE engraved and painted on it.

Life's a Hoot had an article about stickers with owls that you could have made with your name and address on. The people in question wrote back from America and said they couldn't send them here so I tried to get them made here. They were going to be \$70 for 100! They were only \$3.95 (U.S.) for 100 in America. So I had the idea to have a rubber stamp made with my name and address inside an owl and it cost just \$28. Now I can stamp anything anytime and as well as costing half the price of the stickers here it is also less than the American ones if you consider postage, cost of changing money and so forth, so I'm very happy with it.



You also mentioned one lady from Australia saying there are no native owls here. Well although you correctly say that she is wrong it is very rare that we see one day or night even out in the country where it is quiet (it's the same here - Elise). On the odd occasion we see a frogmouth, which isn't really an owl. So the event that took place at my house one day was pretty awful - I think. I live in a town of 90,000 people and near a park. All around there are quite a few trees and our street is lined with them as well so we have a lot of Magpies, Crows and Crossawongs (? did I read that wrong? - Elise). If you know these birds you will know that they are all big, we have no small birds - even no sparrows - and normally they are everywhere. Well one day they were making an even bigger commotion than normal so I looked out of my kitchen windows and saw that they were attacking something on the ground. I'm 99.5% certain it was a barn owl so I thought my thrill of a lifetime had arrived. I thought I would run out and save it's life. Well by the time I covered the distance to reach it, it had flown to a nearby tree with the others in close pursuit and I just got to that tree in time to see it fly off in the



direction of the city, still being chased. I felt down all day that it had been so close and I couldn't make it. I wonder ever since if it survived.

Here's a point of interest for the Australian members. My daughter found a lovely owl book at the library. It is about naming and identifying the Australian owls. I found it very pretty and interesting, but can't afford it at \$30. It was compiled with the university and museum here in Queensland and the Zoo and museum in Victoria so it should have the facts correct. It describes and has colour photos of all the owls here plus four different frogmouths and four owlet-nightjars (which are more like frogmouths than owls). The book is called Australian Owls, Frogmouths and Nightjars and was first published in 1993, written and illustrated by Jill Morris and Lynn Tracy. Worth looking out for, as it gave me quite a thrill to read it. My favourites are still the Grass, Barn, Sooty Masked and Boobook owls.

Yours in owling,  
Ivy Twidale, Towoomba.



This February's 'Owls' Magazine, published by Donna Potrykus, is full of interesting items. There are articles about owl superstitions in Africa, Halina Tepper's collection in Tucson, Arizona, Snowy owls, 'Owl Lodge', painted owls, carved owls, owl banks (money boxes to the Brits!) and more. Something for everyone with owly tastes, I'd say. There are also adverts and addresses for owly items. The magazine is in black and white only, but the photographs and other illustrations are beautiful and it would be worth having for those alone.

To subscribe to Owls for a year costs \$22.50 in the U.S.A., \$24 in Canada and \$28.50 elsewhere. U.S. funds only, non-U.S. please send international money orders in American Dollars. Single copy back issues are \$3.50 plus \$2.50 postage and handling.

The address is:  
Owls Magazine, 3019 Adams Street, Two Rivers, WI 54241 U.S.A.



## The Craft Spot

by Barbara Barrigan, Liverpool, England

My love of owls began in 1976 when I bought my first owl ornament. Since that



time I have never lost my fascination for these wonderful birds as wild and beautiful creatures.

Early on I was really taken by the collector's bug and would always take the opportunity to add to my collection. To date this ranges from vases, money boxes, letter openers, table lamps through to owl clocks (some of which I have made myself).

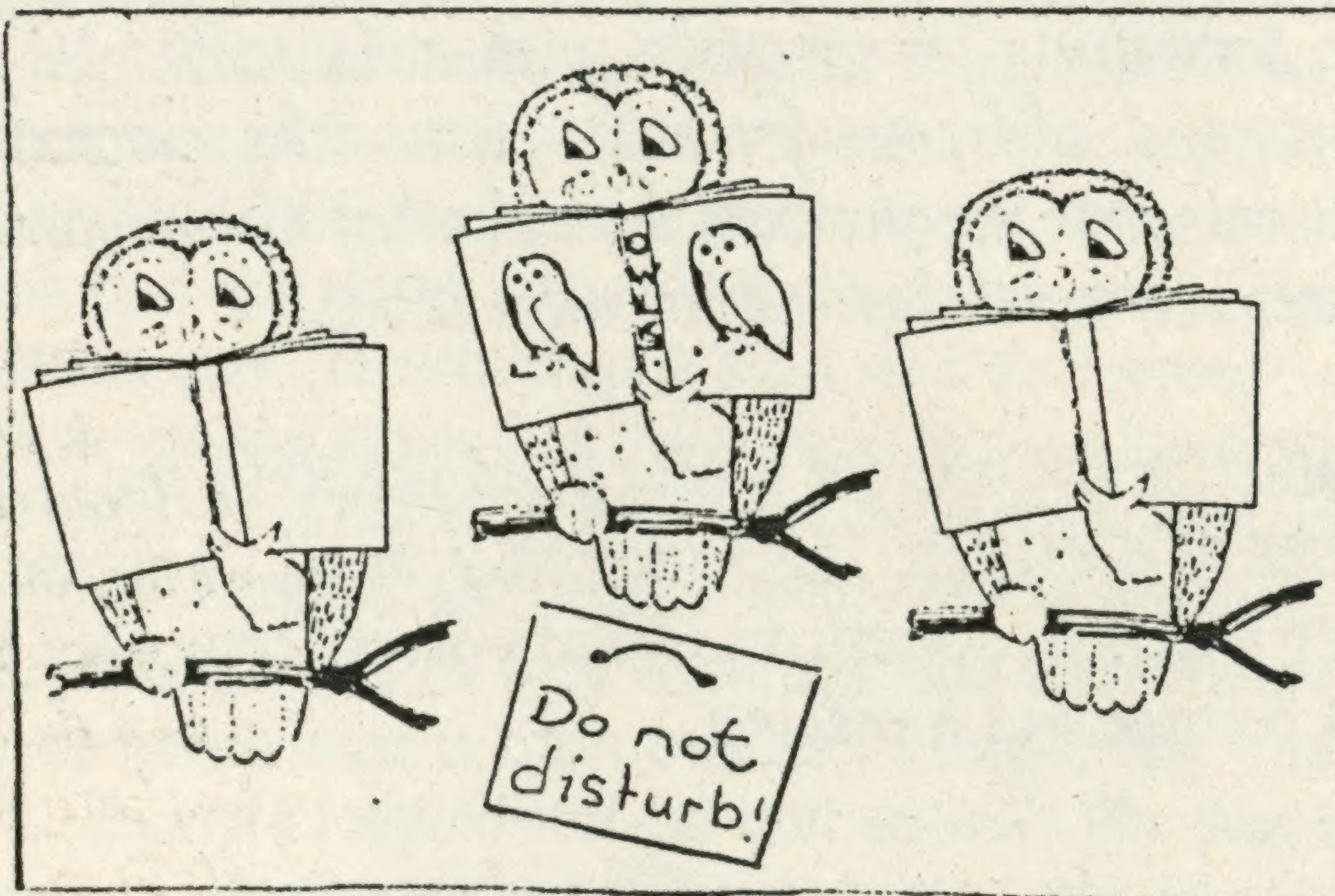
Some years ago I became interested in "Pyrography", a method of creating pictures

by controlled burning onto a wood base. This opened up a whole new interest for me in home woodcraft. I was able to produce my own owl figures in wood and use them to make clocks, calendars etc. I even attempted to make an owl jigsaw puzzle - not a great success but worth trying.

My latest venture is "Stamping". I have got together a small collection of rubber stamps (owls of course), from advertisements in Life's a Hoot, and I have now started to make notelets and personal greetings cards decorated with owl motifs.

I always spend my holidays in the country, last year whilst staying near Lake Bala I visited a local animal sanctuary. To my great delight they has an Eagle owl, two Snowy owls, a barn owl and a number of Tawny owls in residence.

What a thrill to be so close to





these lovely creatures. The Barn Owl actually allowed me to stroke it - sheer bliss.

As you can see I am owl mad. I was so pleased when I came across the address for the IOCC and was able to join a club specifically for owl fans.

Must hoot off for now. I look forward to the next issue!

### *Ideas for cards etc.*

Barbara made the first card shown by photocopying a picture of a sad looking owl and adding a round, coloured sticker with the words "Never again" and a few little circles to make it look as if the owl is thinking that. It is simple but very effective. One of the nicest parts of Barbara's work is in the details - she often runs a felt-tip pen around the edges of the card which gives a lovely finish, and in this case the eyes have been darkened a little to make the owl look even more 'hung over'. Please note that if you use an image for this sort of work it really should be one that is copyright free or from a photo you have taken yourself, although it really doesn't matter for one-off cards to send your friends.

The second card was made by stamping the same image three times, then

adding the smaller images to the back of the middle owl's book and drawing the sign. The eyes and beaks were then coloured in and the card finished as before. Notice that in a card like this which has quite a lot of detail it is more effective to only colour a few parts, as it would otherwise look too busy. Barbara sometimes copies the images onto coloured paper, cutting them out and sticking them to her background colour. Yellow on white looks pleasantly antique.

The calendar was made by drawing the owl onto thin wood,

cutting the wood out into a smooth shape around the drawing and then burning in the drawing with a wood-burning (pyrography) pen, which is a tool that has a hot, shaped tip for this work. Barbara then painted inside the burnt (engraved) lines.

All the items are shown much smaller than actual size.



#### JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



## *A Very Owly Offer*



*Jekkel Toys, of Cornwall, England, make the most wonderful owl cuddly toys (stuffed toys, I think the Americans might say). I first came across them in the magazine "Wild about Animals", which was offering a set of their barn owls as, I think, an inducement to buy a subscription. On first glance I thought the offer was illustrated with a photo of real adult and baby barn owls, but on closer observation I realized that it was a family of Jekkel toys.*

*Of course I contacted Jekkel to see where we could buy these lovely items, and was delighted to be told that as well as teddy bears, squirrels, foxes, ducks, hedgehogs and other adorable creatures they make five species of owl, four of them with matching babies. The Snowy owls even show the differences in markings between the male (almost pure white, only a few markings) and the grey-mottled female. Their baby is just right - in proportion to the adults and grey/brown, just like the baby Snowy I saw a while ago in London Zoo. The family look lovely displayed together.*

*I told them what we are and that we raise money for owl related charities, and they offered to let me buy the toys at a wholesale rate to sell on to members and friends and so boost our funds.*

*These are the owls that are available, and the prices, which allow for postage. If enough people are interested who would want to pay in another currency (for example, Australian dollars) I will see what I can do with exchange rates. Please write if this is the case or if you are interested in any other creatures.*

<i>Toy / Height</i>	<i>£ (British)</i>	<i>\$ (American)</i>
<i>Little Owl (16cm)</i>	<i>6.20</i>	<i>11.50</i>
<i>Baby Little Owl (13cm)</i>	<i>5.40</i>	<i>10.00</i>
<i>Barn Owl (22cm)</i>	<i>7.90</i>	<i>14.00</i>
<i>Baby Barn Owl (14cm)</i>	<i>5.30</i>	<i>9.80</i>
<i>Tawny Owl (22cm)</i>	<i>7.90</i>	<i>14.00</i>
<i>Baby Tawny Owl (14cm)</i>	<i>5.30</i>	<i>9.80</i>
<i>Snowy Owl (25cm)</i>	<i>9.20</i>	<i>16.50</i>
<i>Baby Snowy Owl (14cm)</i>	<i>6.20</i>	<i>11.50</i>
<i>Long-Eared Owl (24cm)</i>	<i>8.80</i>	<i>15.50</i>

*As I will have to wait until I have enough for a bulk order, then for the toys to get to me before I can send them on, please be patient if you send for this offer. Write to the club address.*

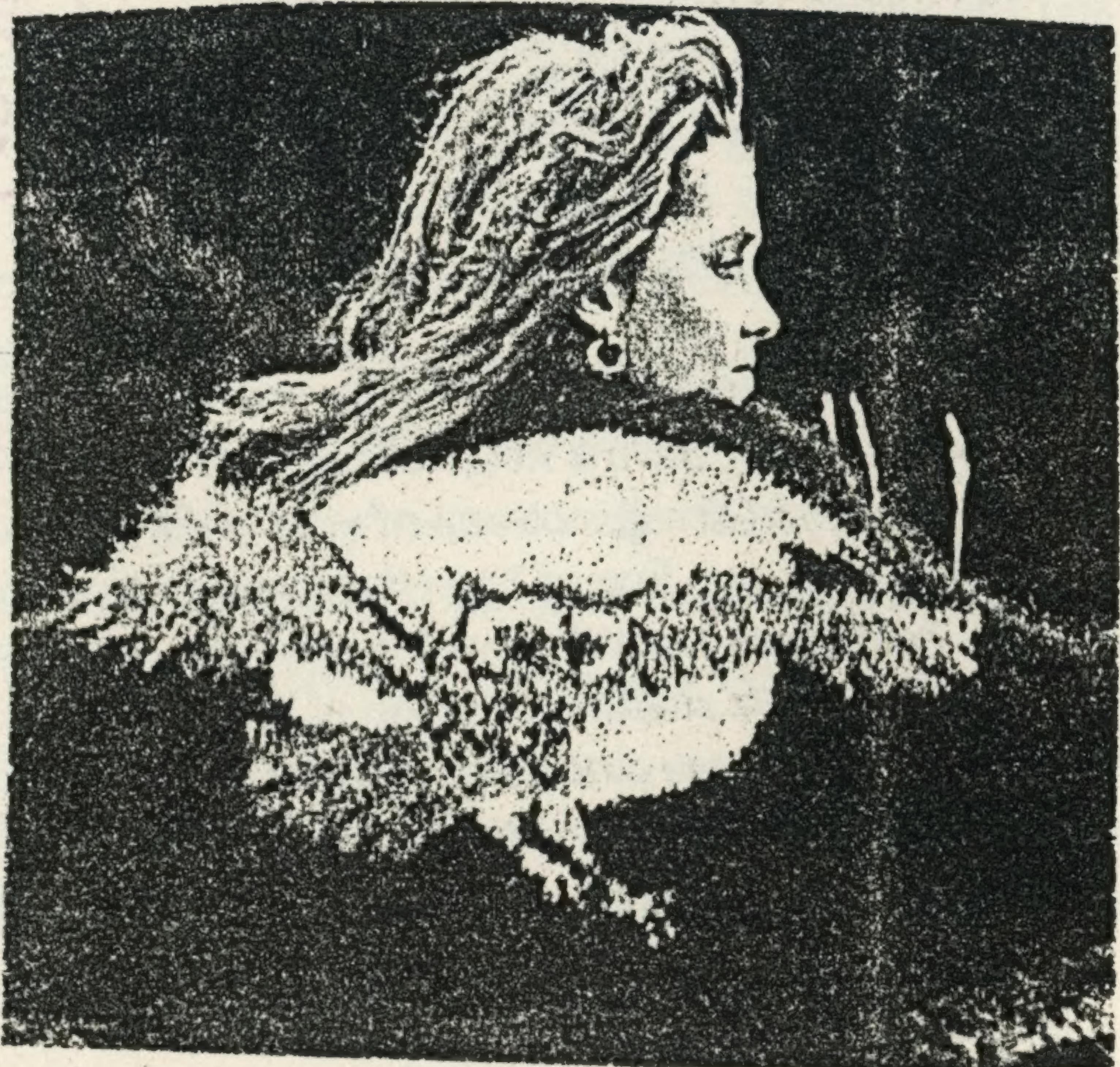


## Owls Seen Around

Not many owls to tell you about this time, but that's probably just as well because I want to show you pictures of most of them.

The first item is a knitting kit. You can make yourself a wonderful, fluffy jacket from Mohair yarn in midnight blue or glitter blue (very dark blue with metallic strands every so often) with an owl on a tree on the left front and an owl in flight on the back, mostly in browns and greys with some yellow and orange for the legs and eyes. It comes with porcelain owl buttons (shown actual size on next page).

The instructions are clear and there are no complicated stitch patterns - if you can do plain and pearl stitches and can change colours when required you CAN knit this. It is a little complicated - sometimes there are eight colour changes in one row, some of which are only for one or two stitches - but







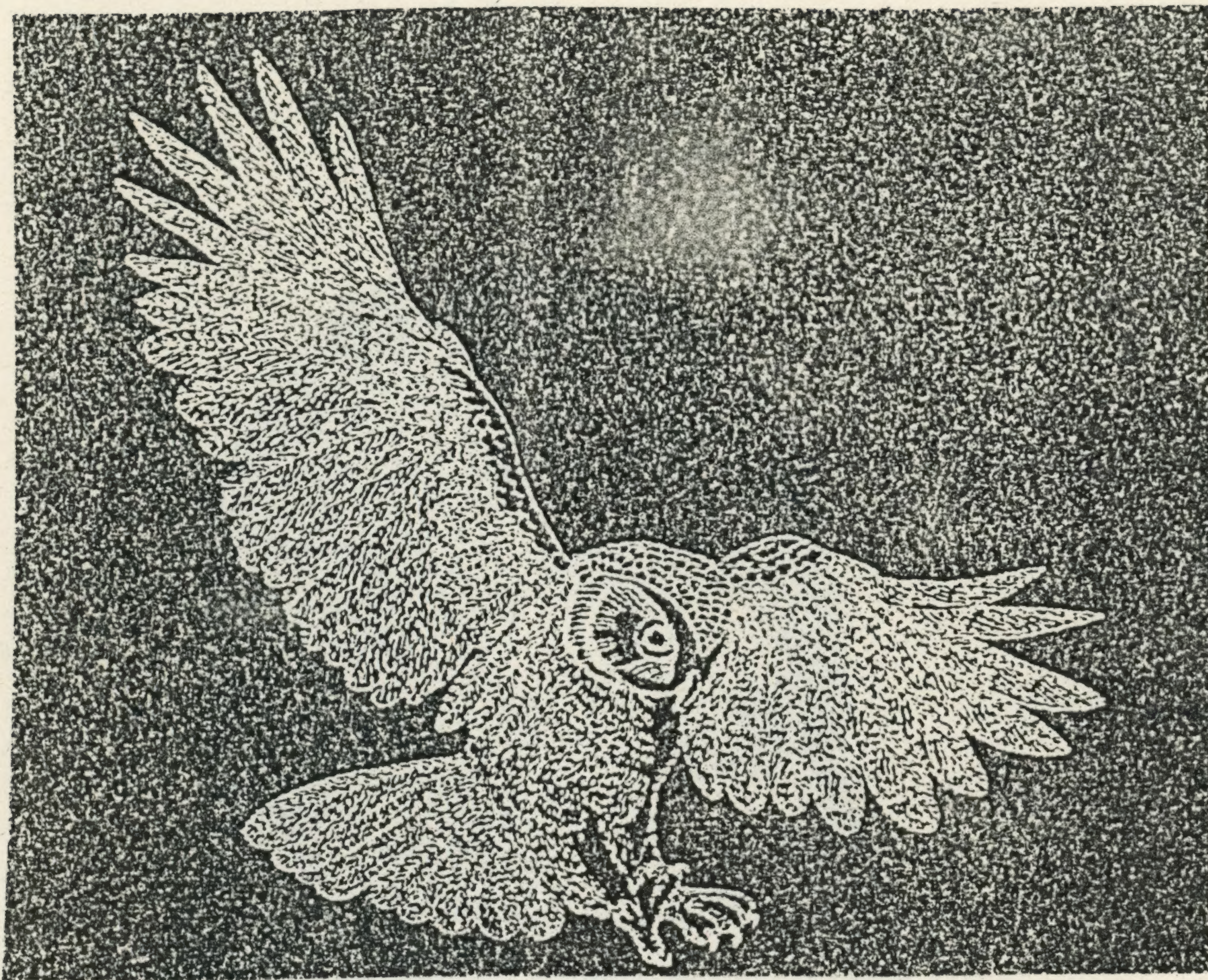
perseverance will win out. I've almost finished mine. The kit is available from Alison Elizabeth Originals, Highfield, West Chevin Road, Otley, West Yorkshire, LS21 3DY (write for price as I don't know the postage charge). They can also supply earrings (silver wire, silver stud or clip) and brooches to match the buttons. These are sold separately at £4.95 including p&p.

The Owl's Nest has a new catalogue out, just bursting with wonderful items, like this rubber stamp for \$8. Other things I particularly like the look of are the Sunset Silhouette, a glow-in-the-dark sun with an owl silhouette flying in front of it, lots of wonderful cards and books and a CD ROM giving information and pictures on all 19 North American owls, including their young, so that if you have the computer set-up for it you can see and hear them. I'm certainly going to get that when I can afford it! A subscription to the catalogue (for 3 issues) costs \$7.50 and individual catalogues cost \$2. You get \$1 off if you send in the order form from the catalogue when you order. Write to The Owl's Nest, PO Box 990, Depoe Bay, OR 97341-0990, U.S.A. Note that although Owl's Nest can only take U.S. funds, they also take VISA and MASTERCARD credit cards so if you have one you can order from anywhere in the world. The overseas postage rates are 10% surface, 25% air.



Would you like some clothing with an owl embroidered on it? If so, Albie Fox can supply it. They have a range of clothing that can be embroidered with one of their stock owl images or one of your own. For example, a sweatshirt with a stock logo and one line of text (for example, your name) costs £17. I bought an XXL dark green sweatshirt with a pearl-coloured owl in flight about 9 inches by 8 inches (shown smaller at the top of the next page) embroidered on the front for £35. Large images cost more because of the time they take to do. Write for a price list to Mr & Mrs Cooke, Llanerch Frochwel, Moel-y-Garth, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 9DA, Wales. Remember to ask to see the owl images available.





Finally, the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) has a spring/summer catalogue which includes most of the owl items that were in the Christmas catalogue that I mentioned last time, including tea-towels, mugs and even a pen with owls. Write to: RSPB Sales Ltd, PO box 54, Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire, DE14 3LQ, England.

### THE OLDEST OWL IN THE WORLD?

*Around the middle of January, several British newspapers reported that hundreds of cave paintings had been found in Vallon-Pont-d'Arc in the South of France near Avignon. The paintings, in shades of red, brown, yellow and black are in excellent condition and are between 18000 and 20000 years old, which means that they date from the Palaeolithic era. They include mammoths, deer, woolly rhinoceroses (common at the end of the Ice Age), bears and owls! The paintings of owls are said to be the oldest known representations of our favourite creatures. The caves appear to have been abandoned some 15000 years ago, and the site of the paintings was only recently discovered because there had been a cave-in in the tunnel leading to the main cave, which is 20 feet high. There is speculation that all 300 paintings may be the work of one man, whose palm-print signature appears many times.*

*There are no plans to let the public have access to the site, but some photographs have been released. If anyone sees a photograph of any of the owls, I would very much like to know the source or see a copy of the picture.*



